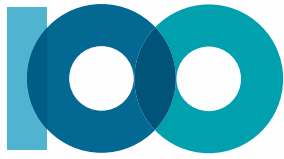


MICHAEL COLLINS



Creative Centenaries

The Story of **Michael Collins**
Key Stage 3 Learning Resource



Creative Centenaries

The story of Michael Collins has been developed by the Nerve Centre's Creative Centenaries project which develops innovative resources around the Decade of Centenaries and important historical events and people.

This is a Key Stage 3 curriculum linked resource that explores some of the events up to and surrounding the partition of Ireland and the formation of two new states. This story looks at the part played by Michael Collins, a leading figure from history involved in the Irish struggle for independence. This story is printed back-to-back with the story of James Craig to show a contrast between two leading figures from the early 20th century.

Further graphic novels highlighting the roles of real people in events from throughout the 1912-1922 period are available to access from www.creativecentenaries.org/resources

Artwork and story development by David Campbell based on a script by Michael O'Neill. With thanks to Fearghal McGarry for historical oversight.

www.creativecentenaries.org

**MAKING
THE
FUTURE**



Peace 
Northern Ireland - Ireland
European Regional Development Fund

Making the Future is supported by the European Union's PEACE IV Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

CORK 1898

Sometimes the most important figures in our history...

...come from very ordinary backgrounds.

Michael Collins was born in County Cork in 1890.

Just because I'm the youngest doesn't mean I'm not the toughest.

HAHA

As a boy Collins heard of the struggle for Irish independence.

So, although the 1798 rebellion didn't succeed,

it brought the ideals of liberty and equality,

to the attention of everyone.

Lisavaird National School

Thanks Mr. Lyons.

Goodbye to you Michael, and good luck.

Remember, be your own man wherever you go.

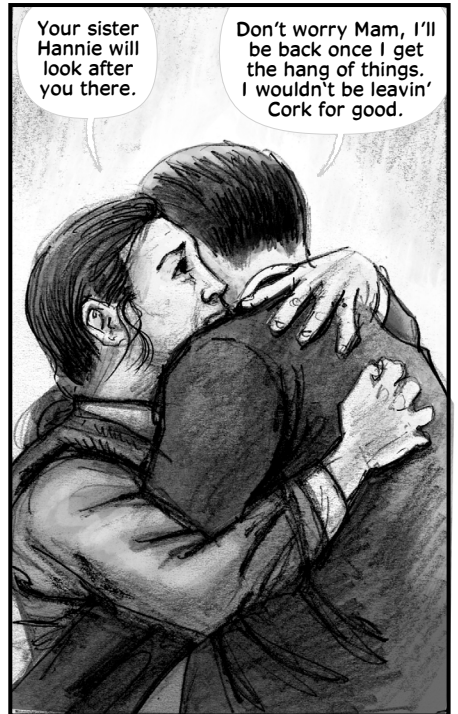
Sure you never know where I'll end up.



Determined to improve himself, Collins sat a clerkship exam for the post office.

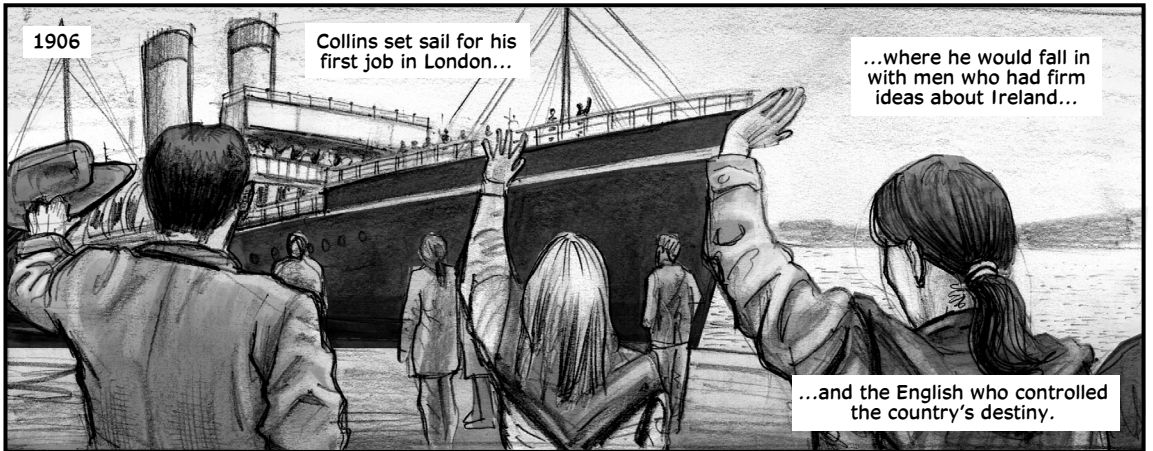
Well Michael, you passed, well done!

You'll be off to London.



Your sister Hannie will look after you there.

Don't worry Mam, I'll be back once I get the hang of things. I wouldn't be leavin' Cork for good.



1906

Collins set sail for his first job in London...

...where he would fall in with men who had firm ideas about Ireland...

...and the English who controlled the country's destiny.

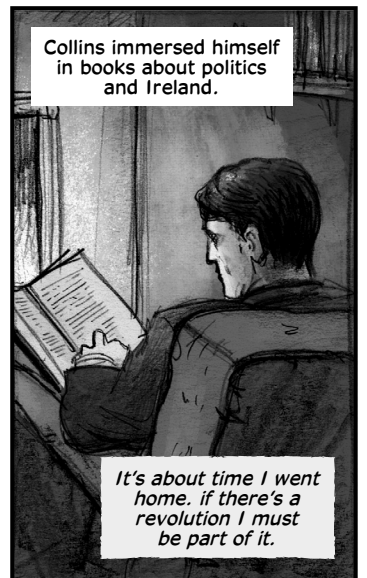


Their organisation was the Irish Republican Brotherhood.

I tell you now, Ireland will never be at peace while it's ruled by England.

Agreed, something needs to change.

Maybe even by force.



Collins immersed himself in books about politics and Ireland.

It's about time I went home. if there's a revolution I must be part of it.

24 APRIL 1916

Patrick Pearse proclaimed a new Irish Republic in Dublin.

Ireland, through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom.

It was the start of a revolution.

Collins had returned home, becoming part of the struggle and served as assistant to Joseph Plunkett, one of the Rising's leaders. The rebels made their base in the historic GPO building.

POBLACHT NA H EIREANN
THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT
IRISH REPUBLIC
TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND

Despite heavy losses and a seemingly impossible situation...

...the commitment of Collins and Plunkett never weakened.

C'mon lads. For the glory of God and the honour of Ireland!

BOOM

CRASH

In a few days, the Rising was over...

...thanks to the firepower and numeric advantage of the British troops.

The leaders of the Rising were executed by the British...

... while surviving volunteers were sent to prison.

Although Collins was ruthlessly committed to fighting for Ireland, he thought Pearse's 'blood sacrifice' was foolish.

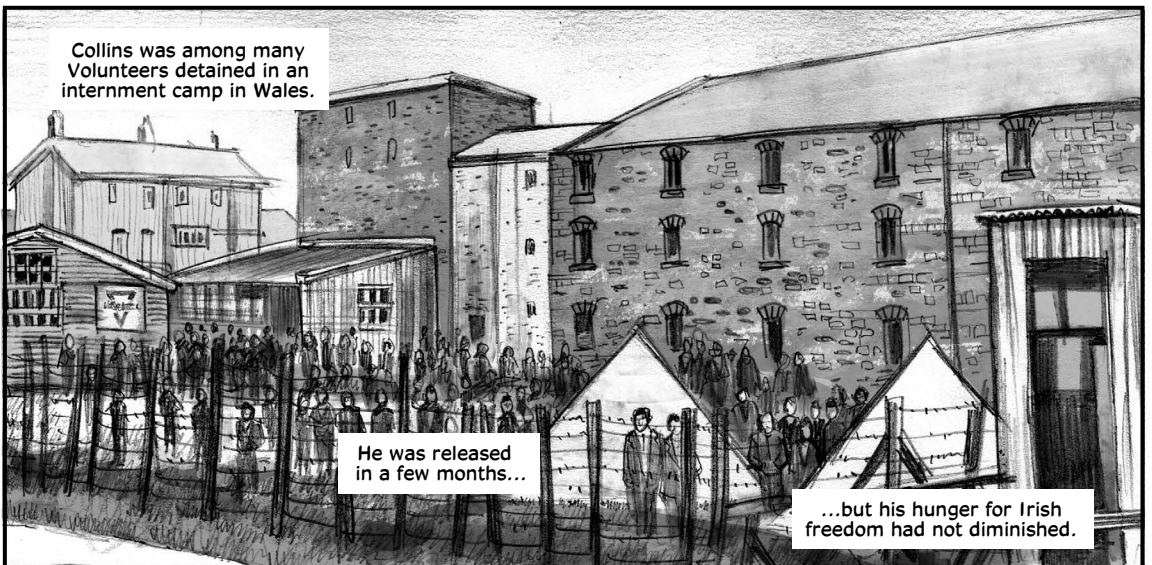


GET THIS LOAD OF TRAITORS OUT OF HERE!

Collins was among many Volunteers detained in an internment camp in Wales.

He was released in a few months...

...but his hunger for Irish freedom had not diminished.





1918

We'll go to a safe house in West Cork, Mick. They won't find you there.

The British government tried to introduce conscription...

...and also alleged Sinn Féin was involved in a conspiracy with the Germans.

Collins went on the run.

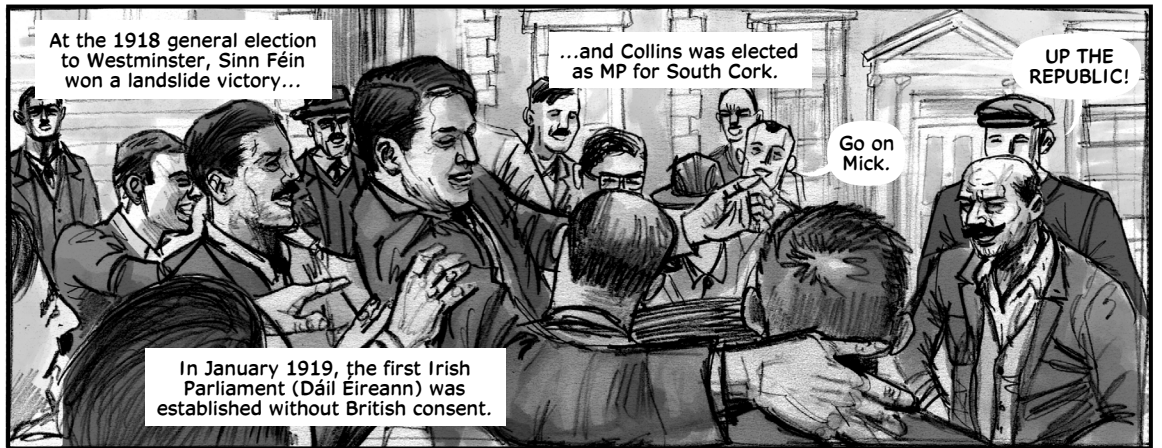


Collins became Director of Intelligence for the IRA...

We need contacts in the Royal Irish Constabulary, the Dublin Metropolitan Police and the British Army.

Find out how they work and what they're planning!

...assisting in a guerrilla war against the British.



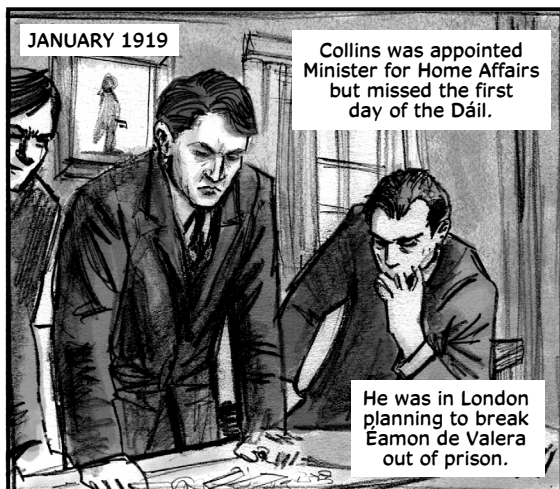
At the 1918 general election to Westminster, Sinn Féin won a landslide victory...

...and Collins was elected as MP for South Cork.

UP THE REPUBLIC!

Go on Mick.

In January 1919, the first Irish Parliament (Dáil Éireann) was established without British consent.



JANUARY 1919

Collins was appointed Minister for Home Affairs but missed the first day of the Dáil.

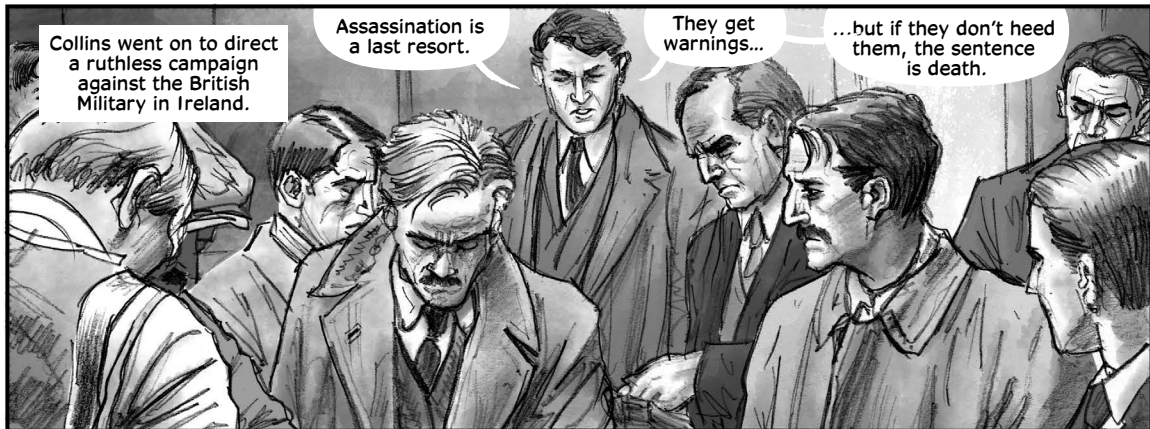
He was in London planning to break Eamon de Valera out of prison.



Incredibly, a plan devised to make a master key worked and on February 3, 1919...

C'mon Eamon, there's a taxi waiting for us!

...de Valera and two others unlocked a door and walked free.

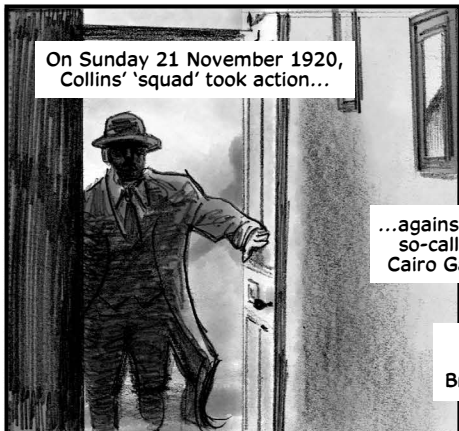


Collins went on to direct a ruthless campaign against the British Military in Ireland.

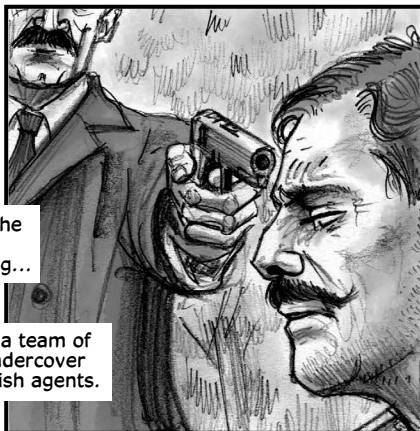
Assassination is a last resort.

They get warnings...

...but if they don't heed them, the sentence is death.



On Sunday 21 November 1920, Collins' 'squad' took action...



...against the so-called Cairo Gang...

...a team of undercover British agents.

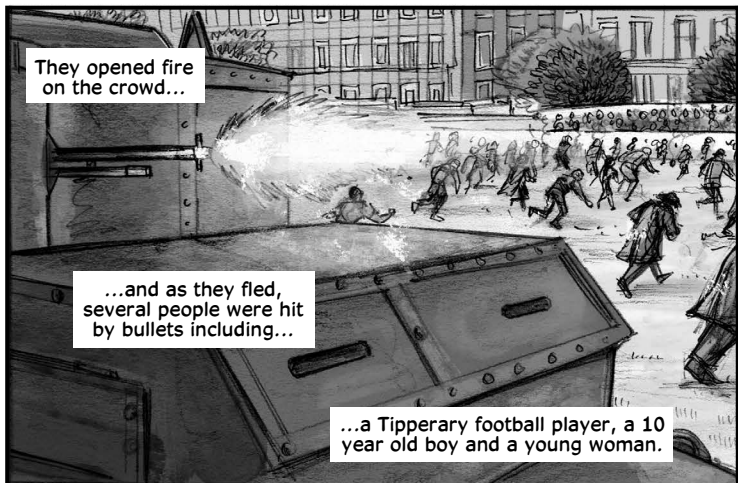


15 people were killed in 8 different Dublin locations.



Later that afternoon, in retaliation, the British security forces entered Croke Park...

...during a Gaelic football match.



They opened fire on the crowd...

...and as they fled, several people were hit by bullets including...

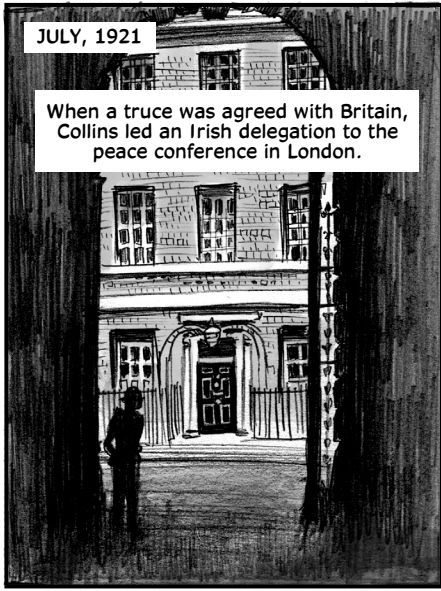
...a Tipperary football player, a 10 year old boy and a young woman.



In total...

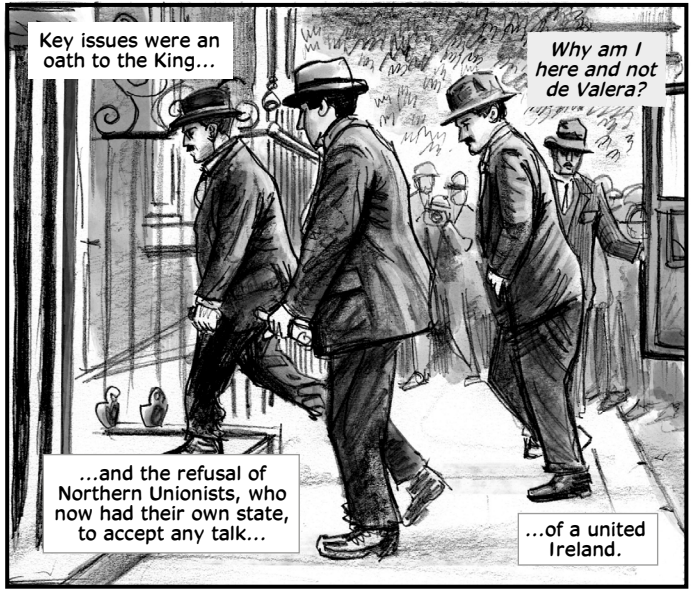
...14 people were killed and over 60 injured.

The day became known as Bloody Sunday.



JULY, 1921

When a truce was agreed with Britain, Collins led an Irish delegation to the peace conference in London.

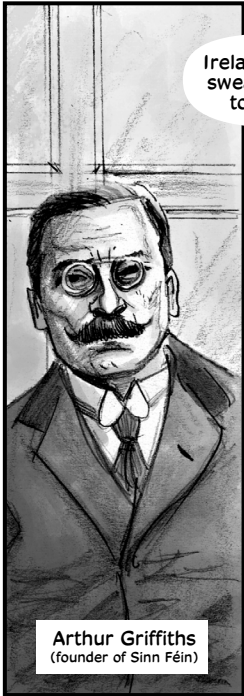


Key issues were an oath to the King...

Why am I here and not de Valera?

...and the refusal of Northern Unionists, who now had their own state, to accept any talk...

...of a united Ireland.



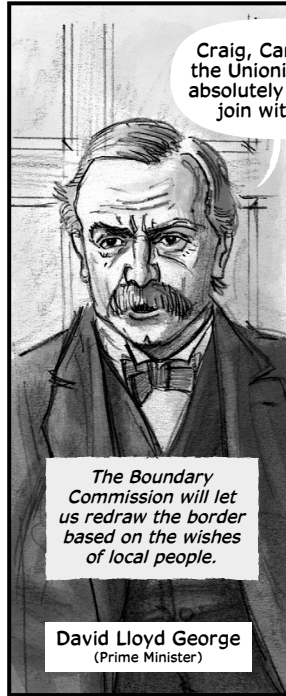
Ireland will never swear allegiance to the King.

Arthur Griffiths
(founder of Sinn Féin)



Maybe an oath to the Irish Free State and some kind of acknowledgement of the King might be enough...

Michael Collins
(Minister for Finance)



Craig, Carson and the Unionist people absolutely refuse to join with you.

The Boundary Commission will let us redraw the border based on the wishes of local people.

David Lloyd George
(Prime Minister)



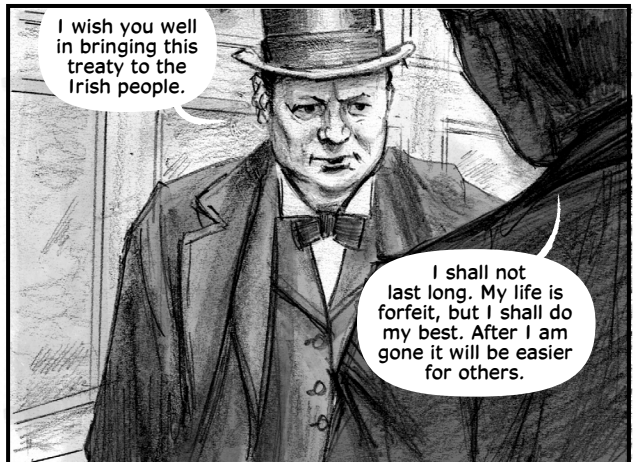
You will have to accept partition!

Winston Churchill



Eventually a treaty was agreed that established the Irish Free State...

...a self-governing dominion within the British Empire.



I wish you well in bringing this treaty to the Irish people.

I shall not last long. My life is forfeit, but I shall do my best. After I am gone it will be easier for others.

Ireland had now been divided into two states, a situation that the IRA refused to accept...

...but which the new Protestant-dominated NI government was determined to enforce.

Conflict continued between the IRA and the recently-formed Ulster Special Constabulary...

...a force criticised for being almost exclusively protestant.

Sectarian violence continued across Northern Ireland.

GET OUT!
AND STAY
OUT OF
OUR CITY!

What does this have to do with our religion?!

In Belfast, thousands of Catholics were forced out of their homes and jobs.

As violence spiralled...

...families were murdered in their homes...

...by men wearing police uniform...

...and IRA reprisals also caused the death of children from bombs and bullets.

James Craig, Prime Minister of NI, blamed the violence on the IRA and the new Irish government.

We have to do something to stop this.

Churchill is demanding a meeting with Collins.

On 30 March 1922 Craig and Collins agreed a plan to end violence, return expelled Catholics to the shipyards, recruit Catholics to the police force and resolve conflicts.

Here's to a new future.

A fair future for all citizens in the North of Ireland.

CRAIG-COLLINS
30th MARCH, 1922

6. "I.R.A. activities to cease in the S
I.R.A. pickets, agreed of the withdr
Stanho

Before the agreement could be enforced...

...more terrible violence meant Ireland's troubles would continue.

On the first night
J. Mac... (63)
B. Mac... (45)
J. Mac...
...offences c
...be open
...Eire
...ball
...N
...pr
...the 31
...me
...treated under the
...th-East Governme
...the Catholi



There was enormous resistance to the Anglo-Irish Treaty.

Many saw it as a betrayal of the Republic, including Eamon de Valera.

This gives us the freedom to achieve freedom!

THIS AGREEMENT CONFLICTS WITH THE WISHES OF THE NATION. YOU SIGNED IT WITHOUT CONSULTING ME!

YOU REFUSED TO COME TO LONDON AND LEFT ME TO AGREE THE DEAL!



Divisions widened between pro and anti-treaty groups...

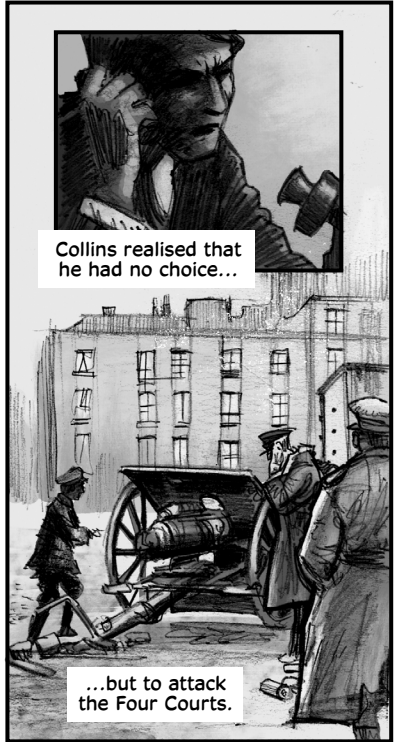
...until anti-treaty IRA men occupied the Four Courts.



The presence in Dublin of a band of men styling themselves the Headquarters of the Executive...

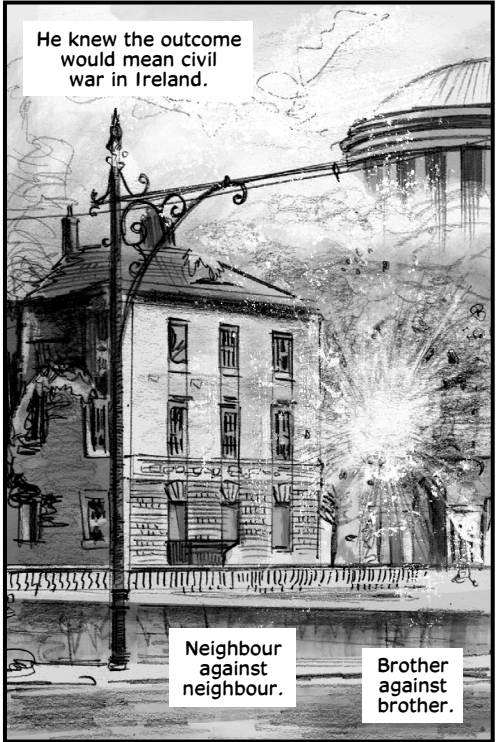
...is a **GROSS** breach and **DEFIANCE** of the treaty.

If it is not brought to a speedy end, we shall regard the treaty as having been formally violated.



Collins realised that he had no choice...

...but to attack the Four Courts.



He knew the outcome would mean civil war in Ireland.

Neighbour against neighbour.

Brother against brother.



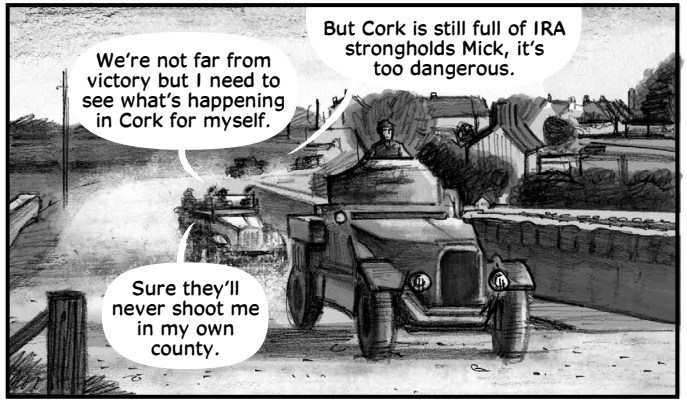
This is a disaster, but there's no other road.

We must accept that freedom imposes responsibilities.



After 11 months of fighting and 2,000 deaths...

...the Free State forces that supported the treaty had the upper hand.



We're not far from victory but I need to see what's happening in Cork for myself.

But Cork is still full of IRA strongholds Mick, it's too dangerous.

Sure they'll never shoot me in my own county.



A few days later the convoy that carried Michael Collins wound its way through the Cork countryside.

You sure about this Mick?

Emmet, if we run into trouble along the way, we'll stand and fight them. Ok?

...yes.



As the convoy got near the town of Bandon, the road was blocked...



...and they came under attack.



GET OUT!

DRIVE LIKE HELL!

NO, LET'S FIGHT THEM!

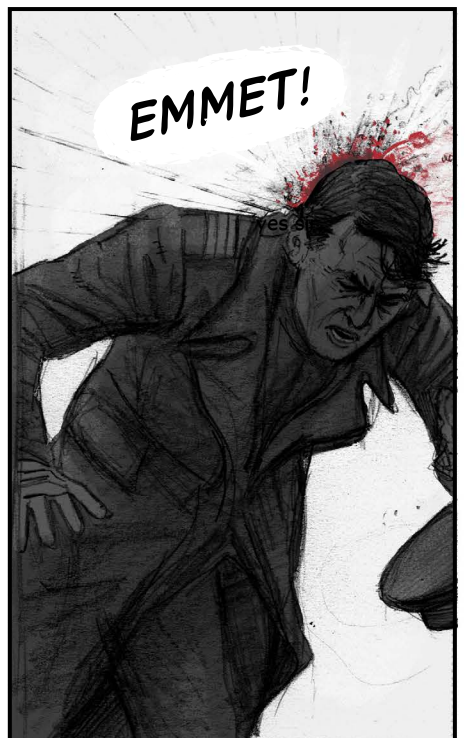


There was a long gun battle.

Where's the big fella?

He's up the road, I can hear him firing!

CRACK
CRACK



EMMET!

Collins' friends and comrades found him lying wounded and despite their best efforts...

...he was dead within minutes.

Michael Collins' funeral was attended by an estimated 500,000 people.

He became remembered as an Irish hero who enabled progress towards an independent Irish Republic. General Mulcahy gave a graveside oration.

When Michael Collins met difficulties, met people that obstructed him, and worked against him, he didn't turn aside to blame them...

...but facing steadily ahead he worked bravely forward to the goal that he intended.

Pages have been written by him in the hearts of our people...

...that will inspire us through many a dark hour. All that is good in us...

...all that is strong in us, is strengthened by the memory of that great hero and that great legend, who is now laid to rest.

I NÓIL CUIMNEAR
MÍCHEAL Ó COILEÁIN
A RUGADAR IAD 1890
MÍ DEIREAD FOSMÁIR 1890
AS US DEASÁHRAD 18 DE
MÍ IUNÁSA 1922



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